UNITARIANISM: OLD AND NEW

An Address Delivered By

Benjamin Fay Mills

On March 2nd, 1902

In Oakland, Alameda and San Francisco

PRICE TEN CENTS

For Extra Copies, Address
The Women's Alliance, First Unitarian Church
Oakland, California.

UNION LABEL

OTHER
Addresses by Mr. Mills

Twentieth Century Religion. Vol. II

No. 1—The Divinity of Man..... 10 cents
No. 2—What is Theosophy?..... 10 cents
No. 3—The Religion of Jesus..... 10 cents
No. 4—Jew and Christian. Did the Jews Crucify Jesus?..... 10 cents
No. 5—What next? An Anniversary Sermon..... 10 cents
No. 6—A Funeral Sermon for Leon Czolgosz..... 10 cents
No. 7—America for Americans, or What Shall We Do With the Foreigners?..... 10 cents
No. 8—Can Free Religion Sing?..... 10 cents
No. 9—Learning to Love..... 10 cents
No. 10—The Gospel of Going On..... 10 cents
Nos. 11, 12 and 13—The Riddle of the Universe: Three Numbers in One Pamphlet..... 25 cents
No. 14—A Program for a Merry Christmas..... 10 cents
No. 15—Religion in the Twentieth Century, with Portrait..... 10 cents

75 Cents for the Fifteen Numbers
25 per cent Discount on orders of $1.00 or More

Other Lectures

Why I Became a Liberal in Religion. Fourth Edition, just issued, with New Portrait..... 10 cents
The Tyranny of the Dead..... 5 cents
Inaugural Address in Oakland: What a Modern Church Ought to Be..... 10 cents
Dead Gods..... 10 cents
The Living God..... 10 cents
The Morals of San Francisco..... 10 cents
The Truth About the Bible. (Four Lectures in One Pamphlet)..... 25 cents
The Church of the Future..... 5 cents
The Divine Man in the Divine Universe..... 10 cents
Other Divine Men..... 10 cents
Unitarianism: Old and New..... 10 cents

50 per cent Discount on orders of $1.00 or More
N. B.—All these Lectures will be sent by mail, if desired

Unitarianism: Old and New

In speaking upon the topic of Unitarianism, I shall divide the subject into its history, its faith, its customs, its achievements and its future.

HISTORY

Taking then, in the first place, its history—we can truly say that Unitarianism is as old as the first conception in the human mind of the unity of God; how ancient that is we do not know; it is known to the dateless Vedas, and we can see how in the uncounted ages of the past the Hebrews gradually worked their way from a belief in many Gods to a faith in one God above other Gods and then of one only Spiritual Guide.

Christianity was Unitarian for the first three centuries of its existence. You will find in the earliest Gospel (the Gospel of Mark) no reference that indicates that the people in those days regarded Jesus as other than a divine man, and if you find out how and when the different books of the New Testament were written you will notice the gradual development of the thought that there were three personalities, instead of one, in the Godhead. It was not, however, until the close of the third century that the Emperor Constantine decided at the time of the Council of Nice that Jesus should be elevated to the position of the Supreme Deity, and as his influ-

ence was more powerful than that of the scholars in the church, the doctrine of the Trinity was established and remains prevalent until this day.

It would be interesting to trace the development of Unitarianism in Europe, but our time would fail us for this purpose and we can take only a very limited view of what we now know as Unitarianism, in America.

The seeds of American Unitarianism were brought to this country in the Mayflower with the Pilgrims. Its spirit was the spirit of the Reformation,—which may be translated as the right of private judgment,—and of the Pilgrims as exemplified by John Robinson when he wrote "The Lord hath yet more light to break forth from His Word." The right and duty of personal judgment in religious matters, the reign of reason in the highest realm to which the human mind can reach, and the progressive revelation of truth; the Spirit of the Reformation and the Spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers,—these were the two principles that caused the birth of American Unitarianism.

The first Unitarian church in this country was the oldest Episcopal church in the city of Boston, by name "King's Chapel." It secured a minister who had what would be regarded in that time as broad theological views, and he induced the congregation to change their ritual, remodeling the old Episcopal ritual so as to make it more in harmony with what was then known by scientists and thoughful men concerning God and the world, and that ritual remains in use in King's Chapel until this day. The second Unitarian church in this country was founded in the old Quaker city of Philadelphia by Joseph Priestly, the discoverer of oxygen, who had fled from England on account of persecution.

But the progressive spirit was especially rife in New England. It may not be known to you that the New England churches, the Congregational churches of the earlier day, had no creeds, and many of the old Orthodox churches in New England are returning to their earliest custom and to-day are abolishing their creeds. The most prominent Congregational church in the United States, the old South Congregational Church of Boston, has abolished its creed entirely and has only a simple covenant of its members that they will work together in faith and in such revelation as the Lord may give them. So that it was a very simple matter, when the ministers and thoughtful laymen grew in their theological conceptions and rejected some of the old dogmas as unfit for the larger knowledge and the better life of man, for these old Congregational churches to become Unitarian in their theology; they did not require any resolutions to that effect, the ministers changed the character of their preaching and little by little the people changed their theological opinions; and almost all—I think without any exception—of the prominent Congregational churches of the earlier day in Eastern Massachusetts are to-day Unitarian. In Boston they do not say "Unitarian" and "Congregational" as we do here, but they say "Orthodox Congregational" and "Unitarian Congregational," because, as I presume you know, the word "Congregational" refers to the fact that the body is governed by its congregation, and a Unitarian church in that sense is just as much Congregational as an Orthodox Congregational church. But the old churches of Boston and Salem and Plymouth and Newburyport and all the cities round about are Unitarian; the First and Second Congregational

Churches of Boston, the First Congregational Church of Plymouth, the old Forefathers' Church, and the First Congregational Church of Salem are all in the Unitarian fellowship.

The original controversy in America was a theological discussion concerning the person of Jesus, and both the Unitarians and their opponents argued the question on the basis of Scripture. The earliest American Unitarians had no thought of appealing to reason as their final guide, as thoughtful men do to-day, but they regarded the Scripture as ultimately authoritative, as did the most Orthodox of their time, and they never said that Jesus was "only a man" as we hear people say now-a-days. They believed in the divinity of Jesus just as much as those who controverted their position, but they said that while Jesus was divine, he was not Deity In other words, they claimed that the Scriptures taught that Jesus was the Son of God and that He held the same relation to God that an ordinary earthly son holds to an earthly father, but that He was not equal with the Father but possessed the same character. And the old Unitarian controversies of one hundred years ago ranged around that point as to whether Jesus was a part of the Trinity, as to whether he was Deity or whether he was a divine man, a kind of mediator, a demi-god part way between the great God and His human child. But as the controversy waxed more bitter and grew in the earlier years of the second quarter of the century, those who had been appealing to Scripture to establish their contentions began to ask, "What is the Scripture to which we appeal"?, a question that had never before been asked in the world's history except by men who had been silenced by their execution. And when they

began to ask, " What is the Scripture "?, they found that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, were simply Hebrew literature, and they were forced—as are all thoughtful people of to-day, both in and out of the Unitarian church, especially in the Congregational and Episcopal churches—to give up entirely the doctrine of the infallibility of the Scriptures. I do not know (and I know almost all of them) of one Congregational minister out of five to-day who believes in the infallibility of the Scriptures. I do not say the inspiration of the Scriptures, for there is a vast difference. I believe in the inspiration of some of the Scriptures; in other words, I believe that some of those utterances have sounded the heights and the depths of human nature and of what man can know about God, about the existence of the race and conceptions concerning its origin and destiny—that sort of inspiration that has come to its present climax in our time under perhaps the greatest prophet that the world has ever known, Ralph Waldo Emerson.

The development of science which came in the third quarter of the century was welcomed by only one religious denomination, the Unitarian. The Unitarians have believed in science not as the hand-maid of religion but as a part of religion, from their earliest organization. The only religious people on earth who accepted the doctrine of evolution when it was first announced were the Unitarians, and I do not know, and have never known, a Unitarian who was not a consistent evolutionist. Until this day, the theory of evolution is bitterly fought in some of the other churches although, for the most part, it has entered into all of the theological thinking and modifies all the public religious utterances of our time. But Unitarianism welcomed science and said that

it is reverent to try to discover that which God has not yet revealed, not only in His word but in nature and in all that may be learned from nature.

After awhile, as these liberal doctrines spread in the West, they began to take on a more liberal shape, both in thought and organization than in New England, until there grew up in America what might be called two types, not differing greatly, differing not at all in the fundamentals, but two types of Unitarian thinking, the Eastern and the Western. The Eastern people were more conservative; they liked to call themselves by the name of Channing, and to ring again the changes of the old controversy as to whether Jesus was "a God who lived humanly or a man who lived divinely," but the others saw that a new day had come with new problems, and they felt called to go on as their fathers had gone on, to go on beyond their fathers and to encourage their children to go beyond them; so much so that the Western Unitarian Conference which, in the days when communication was difficult between the East and the West, had attained a more independent existence than it has to-day and became as liberal as a religious body could possibly be. It seemed for awhile as though even in this little body there was to be the rending asunder that has taken place in all the other communions, but it was obviated by the very fact of the elasticity of the organization, until finally, about eight years ago, in 1894, the Eastern and the Western Unitarians came together at their National Annual Conference in Saratoga and adopted a platform, which was considered such a culmination of the expression of the unity of the Spirit that venerable men and women of the ministry and churches wept copiously, smiling through their tears, embraced one an-

other and spontaneously broke out into singing the Doxology. Since that time there has never been any question of freedom of opinion to be expressed anywhere in the Unitarian church. And this was the platform they adopted, not as an authoritative creed, but as the best expression of what they thought the churches then believed—

"These churches accept the religion of Jesus, holding in accordance with His teaching that practical religion is summed up in 'love to God and love to man,' and we invite to our working fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our spirit and our practical aims."

Now I would not endorse that as an ideal platform, and yet it is so far beyond any other ecclesiastical statement that I like it very much. Like anything else, it was good for its time but it would be bad out of its time, and it marked a certain advance of the position which the churches had only reached in order to advance beyond it.

Until this time, the Unitarian church had regarded itself as one of the branches of the Christian church and the name "Christian" is still retained in some of its phraseology—for instance, the denominational paper is called "The Christian Register," and the official phraseology concerning the National Conference still reads, "The National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches." But when this question came up two years ago at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the American Unitarian Association, when representatives were gathered from all over the world, from Holland, Hungary and England as well as from America, and a world-wide organization was effected, the name "Christian" was deliberately left out of the larger organization of Unitarian churches; not because any

one would disparage essential christianity, but because the leaders desired a more nearly universal title.

The best word concerning the spirit and purpose of Unitarianism that I have ever read has been given by the Hon. S. J. Barrows, a Unitarian Minister and at one time editor of "The Christian Register," and afterwards elected as Representative in Congress,—

"Unitarianism is that free and progressive development of historic Christianity which aspires to be synonymous with universal ethics and universal religion."

That is magnificent, and it comes as near being an acceptable utterance of what Unitarianism now stands for as any that has ever been given to the world. It is a long distance to travel from the old squabbles over the person of Jesus and the infallibility of the Scriptures to where, through its official organ and its editor, a man honored not only in theological affairs but in the affairs of state, Unitarianism can say that to-day it stands for "that free and progressive development of historic Christianity which aspires to be synonymous with universal ethics and universal religion."

FAITH

In the second place, as regards the faith of the Unitarian church—there is one sense in which we have no creed and there is another in which we have. One of our members said to me this week that a lady asked him, "Why do you say you have no creed, for whenever I go to your church the minister is always telling about what you believe?" I never tell what anybody else believes; I tell what I believe, and if you mean by creed what we believe, then the Unitarian church has the larg-

est and most powerful creed that was ever formed. If by one who has a creed, you mean a believer, then we are people who have a creed and we claim to have the best and largest creed that the world has ever known or that the world can ever know, because it is a part of it to believe in its growth as the intelligence of the world develops. But when we say "creed" in the ecclesiastical sense, we do not mean what a man believes, but a statement that is supposed to be ultimate and authoritative, that is to govern the opinions of the members of the organization. A man, for instance, cannot be a member of the ordinary Orthodox church without saying "I assent to certain doctrines concerning God, man, Christ, the Bible and Eternity." These articles are ordinarily read over in the hearing of those who join the church and they take a vow that they thoroughly believe them. And if the ministers do not give their assent to them, they cannot preach, and if, after they commence to preach, they lose their faith in these opinions and it is publicly known, they are supposed to be discredited and no longer allowed to preach. Now in this sense we have no creed, we have no authoritative statement of doctrine and we never can have. We do not believe that doctrine is authoritative and we do not believe that doctrine is immutable and unchangeable; it is meant to change; we have a better doctrine than the world knew one hundred years ago; we believe that all of the churches to-day have better thoughts than they had one hundred years ago; and while we do make authoritative statements of our theological opinions, and while we believe they are the best opinions that the world has up to date (and we would be unfaithful to ourselves if we did not believe it), we would, as one of our

ministers says, write on every statement of Unitarian faith what we see printed on railroad tickets, "Good for this day and train only."

But while we do have faith, and while above all other organizations that I have ever known the Unitarians deserve to be called believers, there is this striking fact that, as suggested by one of the most eminent Unitarian preachers of the country, having no authoritative theological tests, the Unitarian ministers and people are more at one in their theological opinions than the people of any other communion on earth. I have known intimately as many orthodox ministers and church members as any man in America, and I am sure that you who know me, understand that I would rather understate any seemingly critical expressions of opinion that I might make concerning their beliefs and practices than overstate them. But since I have known the Unitarian ministers, whom I did not know at all until a few years ago, I think I can say, as Dr. Savage does, that they are to-day more at one in their essential beliefs than the people of any denomination in the country, and that without any attempt to be so; by opening the doors and taking off the restrictions, saying "Go on and find out all you can of truth."

Now there are these four principles that every Unitarian that I know, minister and layman, accepts, and I do not know of any others like them that would be so thoroughly accepted by any other people in the world—

First, the progressive appreciation of truth. Of course there may be some who differ from me; I cannot speak for anybody else, but every Unitarian minister and layman that I know believes that all truth has not been appropriated by man; that what we have is valu-

able, but that little by little we are to grow in our ability of comprehension.

Second, the freedom of the individual and of the church. There is no Unitarian anywhere who would think of putting the least check upon the development of the opinions of a man or the expression of the opinions of a church. A church may believe any doctrine that it can or none at all, and so may an individual.

Third, the importance of character. This is the foundation of the Unitarian church; it is "not so much rightness in thinking as uprightness in living" that is emphasized by the Unitarians; as some one said, "Its father was brains; its mother was morality," and as our good Dr. Hale says, "There may be forty theories as to predestination, but only one determined resolve for purity of life"; and the one who wrote the old poem of "The Creeds of the Bells," trying to indicate what the various churches believed, wrote wisely and well in these lines:

> "Do well! do well! do well! do well!"
> Rang out the Unitarian bell.

As one writer says, "Unitarianism may be summed up in this statement, 'One God and one hundred cents on the dollar.'"

And in the fourth place, another great principle that is accepted by Unitarians everywhere is the obligation of service. If you will take pains to study the charities of this city, you will see that they are administered by Unitarians out of all proportion to our numbers; from one-fourth to two-thirds of the managing boards of the charities of this city are members of this congregation, and you will find the same thing more largely true in some other cities than you do even in Oakland.

When you come to theories, I can give you a general outline of what most of us would accept. We commence by the scientific method with the study of man, as Channing said, this is "the one sublime idea, the dignity of human nature." Every other creed begins with God, about Whom we know very little, and ends with man. Take the Presbyterian or the Episcopalian creed or any other, and you will find that two-thirds of it is occupied in telling what man ought to think about God, and then at the close there are some little statements as to what he ought to think about himself. You may remember the saying that is ascribed to Dr. Chapin, a celebrated Universalist minister of New York, who was asked to tell the difference between Universalism and Unitarianism, and he said that "the Universalists believed that God was too good to damn men and the Unitarians believed that man was too good to be damned." Whether Dr. Chapin said that or not, that is a fair statement of one thing that Unitarians believe; they believe that there is material about every human being that is worth saving and that the Person, or Influence, or Purpose, or Intelligence, or Force, or whatever you please to call it, that formed man in the first place knows this. And so they commence with the study of man and they say, "If a man loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen"? In other words, if he does not know his brother whom he has seen, how can he know God who is invisible?; but when they studied man they found God. They found, for example, as Dr. Chadwick says, that man flowers into worship as naturally as the tree flowers into fruit or the bush into blossoms. They found aspiration in every human soul. They found great conceptions of truth, and

duty, and opportunity. They knew that science teaches that we are formed by our environment, and they said, "What is this great environment that calls out this spirit from the human soul"?, and they answered, that this environment of man is that which was before all things, "knowing which all other things must be known"; that which put mind and conscience into man, and this must be as great as the greatest man, and as wise as the wisest, and as powerful as the most powerful, and as good as the best, and wiser, more powerful and better than the greatest. Is not that a great conception of God growing naturally from our scientific method? And so when they had come to see the great God from knowing the great humanity, they said that a God Who is as great as this must be confined not simply to his relationship to the human race, but there must be a wise purpose in all things from before the beginning until after the ending, and they began to believe in nature, in the universe and in the universes that may be beyond; and they bound these all together until that name, a name so great that, while time may change, it will never have to be altered to express the best thought that man can ever know, that name "Unitarianism," instead of meaning some speculation of man concerning the conception of the God-head, began to mean the unity of all things, "God manifest in the flesh," God manifest in the earth, God manifest in the stars and beyond them all.

One of the most eminent preachers of the United States to-day is Dr. Minot J. Savage of New York. He comes as near being an authoritative speaker for the best sentiment of Unitarianism as any man in the country, and this is the way he sums up the meaning of the word "Unitarian"—

First, Unity of Substance. The scientific doctrine that there is only one substance and that matter and spirit are different manifestations of the one great Reality.

Second, Unity of Life.
Third, Unity of Man.
Fourth, Unity of Ethics.
Fifth, Unity of Religion.
Sixth, Unity of Purpose.
Finally, Unity of Destiny.

The word Congregational means governed by the congregation; the word Presbyterian means governed by Presbyters or Elders; the word Episcopalian means governed by Bishops; and these words may some day pass away, but the great word that affirms the unity of substance, the unity of life, the unity of man, the unity of ethics, the unity of religion, the unity of purpose and the unity of destiny, cannot easily be superseded by a better one!

CUSTOMS AND GOVERNMENT

In the third place, as regards the customs—as I presume you know, members are received into the Unitarian church upon the expression of their desire to be members; they are never asked any questions. Some churches do not even elect their members as we do here. All that is necessary to join most of the Unitarian churches of Boston is to write your name in a book, and in some cases, you do not even have to do that; you simply tell the minister that you wish to be a member. The organization of the Unitarian churches in New England is so loosely jointed that at a dinner I attended in Boston some time ago at which a Director of the Ameri-

can Unitarian Association and another very prominent Unitarian were present, they said that they did not know whether they were members of the church or not. There are no barriers anywhere. I never heard of a case of discipline in the Unitarian church, not because we think we are all perfect, but because we do not regard ourselves as one another's overseers, but as a company of brothers and sisters, not a society of critics, and because, while we regard the church as an army, we regard it also as a school and a hospital, and believe that people who are ignorant and want to learn, and people who are sick and want to get well ought to be in the fellowship of the church. Notwithstanding this the membership of the Unitarian church is renowned for its high moral character.

The Unitarian church is always democratic. The Initiative and the Referendum existed in the Unitarian church long before those words were known in politics, and in this church, or any Unitarian church in the land, the congregation is the absolute ruler. There is a simple way by which you may call the congregation together and enact any legislation you please or overturn any legislation that may be enacted by the Board of Trustees. The National bodies are the American Unitarian Association and the National Unitarian Conference, but they have absolutely no legislative power and no control over any church. There is no body of people, Unitarian or otherwise, that has any control whatever over this congregation except in a moral way, according to the Unitarian principles of fellowship.

As regards the ceremonies of the Unitarian church, there are none. They vary all the way from the greatest elaboration to no ceremonies at all. There are Unitarian

churches in the United States where the minister does not pray; in some they do not even sing hymns, and in others the ceremony is so elaborate that you would not know but that you were in a Protestant Episcopal church. People may sing, or pray, or stand up or kneel down, or do none of these things. The church with its minister makes its own ceremonies and methods of procedure. For example, take the churches about the Bay and see how they vary and yet how truly one they are.

So liberal in practice are Unitarians that even the Harvard Divinity School, founded as a Unitarian Theological Seminary, calls its professors from any denomination;—the overseers only ask where are the men who can teach and lead others into the discovery of truth.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Now concerning the achievements. I can speak concerning the accomplishments of the Unitarians without immodesty, for I cannot say, "A part of which I was." There are only four hundred and fifty churches in the United States, and the membership does not equal one two-hundredth part of the population, so that people sometimes say, "Why, when you are so reasonable, so earnest and so helpful, is the membership so small"? I want to answer that once for all. I want to say to you as Mr. Horton, the President of our Sunday School Association, said—

> "Unitarianism never was and never will be a code of belief, or an ecclesiastical structure; but it is a habit of soul, an atmosphere; it is a spirit."

And the object of Unitarianism has never been to build up a church, but rather to lose its life in order that it might save it; to build up the community and the city by

the investment of itself,—as someone says, "As a lump it is exceeding small, but as a leaven it is vast and omnipresent"; its aims have never been selfish. Suppose they had been; suppose Theodore Parker had tried to establish a Unitarian Cathedral instead of freeing the soul of man! Suppose Emerson, from generations of Unitarian ministers, had tried to build a great temple instead of sowing, as no other man sowed in human soil, the seeds from which were to grow the fruitage of the most glorious harvest of the garden of God! Suppose Edward Everett Hale had tried to found a Theological Seminary instead of uttering his great sentiments that have caused the Lend-a-Hand Clubs, the King's Daughters and the Epworth Leagues to spring up all over the land, as well as framing as he did the first outline of the International Tribunal of Peace that has at last been established! Suppose Dr. Bellows had given himself to founding Unitarian churches instead of administering the great Sanitary Commission that was the glory of our Civil War! Suppose Starr King had said, "I am going to see how many Unitarian churches I can plant in San Francisco, in Oakland and throughout California," instead of during the four years of his limited life interesting himself in the great battle for freedom and saving California to the Union! And for the laymen, suppose Thomas Jefferson had presided over a Presbyterian General Assembly, and never had written a Declaration of Independence. Benjamin Franklin did not edit "The Christian Register," but he gave himself absolutely to his country, and he bound the unseen to the seen. And if you were to write down the names of the great Unitarians of America, you would simply have, as a noted man says, "a directory of illustrious names."

In Sparks' recent book called "The Men Who Made the Nation," he describes twelve men as worthy of notice—and how many were Unitarians? Seven;—more than half. Out of this little body, one-two hundredth part of the population of the United States, there have been Unitarian statesmen like Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Daniel Webster, John Marshall, Justice Joseph Story, Edward Everett and Charles Sumner, and a long list of great men down to the present day. There were only twenty-nine men who received votes enough to have their names recorded in the Hall of Fame recently opened in New York, and out of this number twelve were Unitarians;—almost one-half. In literature and education the proportion is even larger. If you write down the names of American poets, you will find that they have almost all been Unitarians, and a very large proportion of the best hymns sung in all the churches to-day were written by Unitarians. In the series on "American Men of Letters," there are eighteen noted names, eleven of whom were Unitarians.

And when you come to philanthropies, that is our specialty. But we have never founded any Unitarian hospitals—we have founded hospitals for men and women. The charities of Boston are almost all administered by Unitarians; the greatest charities of the United States have been largely founded by Unitarians, and yet there is not a "Unitarian" charity on earth.

This, then, is what I mean when I say that the Unitarian church believes in losing its life in order to save it.

But perhaps the greatest effect that Unitarianism has produced has been its influence on the Orthodox churches. In Orthodox churches to-day they teach the

goodness of man. I used to sit as a boy, Sunday after Sunday, and hear my old Presbyterian minister tell us we were children of the devil and absolutely depraved, and the only way we could get right was by a miraculous process by which God would have mercy upon us for his son's sake and forgive our sins and adopt us at last into his family. They do not preach that in intelligent Orthodox churches to-day. The ministers in Oakland now tell men that they are children of God and they ought to live like children of God, and that is the Unitarian doctrine. Where there is one Unitarian inside of a Unitarian church, there are one thousand outside, and as a prominent minister of New York says, "If all who do not believe the creeds were to come out of the Orthodox churches, the exodus would be greater than that of the Israelites from Egypt." To-day in almost all of the prominent churches you will hear good Unitarian doctrine of a generation ago. But the best Unitarians have gone beyond that, and they are impatient of everything except that which "aspires to be synonymous with universal ethics and universal religion."

THE FUTURE

We need more and more to emphasize the unities and not the diversities; we need, not to call ourselves a sect of any religion, but to say that as Judaism grew out of Idolatry, and as Christianity grew out of Judaism, so we mean to stand for the largest faith, and hope, and love that may grow out of Christianity. The Unitarian philosophy and practice stands for the best, for proving all things and holding fast that which is good; not to belittle the past but to say that—

"All of good the past hath had
Remains to make our own time glad,
Our present, daily life divine
And every land a Palestine."

To hold everything tentatively; to say the past was good, the present is better, but the best is yet to come; to write on our banners the motto of Richard Wagner, who said, "There are some people who are asleep, and some who are awake, and some who are awaking," and he added, "I work for those who are awaking." I look at what we are trying to do in the way of a church organization as the erection of the scaffold rather than the building, and I shall be satisfied when the day comes when the scaffold shall be taken down, "not because it was base but because its work was done." But I believe that, never in history, has any people received a diviner call or been led to a possibility of wider usefulness than the people of whom and for whom I now speak, and we stretch out our hands of welcome to all who will join with us in our earnest aspiration to learn and live and love.